

15. COLLINGWOOD HOUSE - ACCOMMODATION OPTIONS

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The purpose of this report is to advise the Board of alternative accommodation options for the New Brighton Residents' Association to replace Collingwood House, and the outcome of a meeting with the New Brighton Residents' Association and the other community groups who currently use Collingwood House.

BACKGROUND

The Council through the 2001/02 budget process has declined to fund the purchase of Collingwood House on economic grounds, and because other options for accommodation required investigation. The request is being driven by the New Brighton Residents Association's stated need for premises for its own and other community activities.

Collingwood House was purchased and set up originally by the Rotary Club of Christchurch East as a community project for Age Concern. In August 2001, Councillors Carole Evans and Alister James met with representatives of Age Concern. Age Concern outlined the background to its decision to sell Collingwood House, namely that its key role is to provide support to the aged in their homes. Consideration of selling the property had coincided with this philosophy, as well as with low usage of the House.

The option of leasing the property from Age Concern was also discussed at the above meeting. However, the Age Concern representatives stated that they would not consider any philanthropic component in any lease arrangement, so any lease would need to be on a basis to give Age Concern a market-related return on the property. At the conclusion of the meeting, Age Concern agreed that it would receive a leasing proposition from the Council and that no decision on the sale of the property would be made in the interim.

At the Community Board meeting on 19 November 2001 the Board decided that Age Concern be advised that the Board cannot commit itself to requesting the Council to purchase/lease Collingwood House, pending further investigatory work around other accommodation options which would adequately meet the needs of the community in New Brighton.

DISCUSSION

Eight alternative accommodation options have been explored for the New Brighton Resident's Association.

The Power Boat Club: A main hall and a small lounge with kitchen facilities available. Suitable for small to large groups. Reasonable proximity to central New Brighton. Adequate parking but some concerns re access to hall across busy road. *Charges:* There is a nominal fee charged to community groups.

Seaview Christian Centre: There are two rooms available for use by community groups; however one is used on almost a constant basis already and a staff member has to unlock the rooms for evening meetings. *Charges:* \$50.00 per meeting.

St Faiths' Church: Hall and side lounge available. *Charges:* Usually \$20.00 per hour, but this is negotiable.

New Brighton (Working Men's) Club: There are several rooms, large and small, for community groups to use. *Charges:* No charge for community groups. The Manager made the comment that this is because the Club views itself as part of the community and are keen for community groups to use the Club's facilities.

Central New Brighton School: The hall is not hired out during school hours; there are also regular hirers already on three evenings per week. *Charges:* Big hall = \$253.20 per hire, bond of \$250.00. Small hall = \$140.65 per hire, bond of \$125.00.

Rawhiti Domain: There are two buildings available, both empty with no users. No applications were received when the tennis club was advertised for lease but a triathlon club may be interested and others are preparing a proposal to run some tennis coaching there.

The ex-bowling club would be ideal. It is located immediately to the left of the main entrance from Shaw Avenue into Rawhiti Domain. The building is approximately 15 x 8m, with a lounge and kitchen facilities and toilets and a foyer. There is parking for about ten cars next to the bowling green. The green has the potential to be turned into a community garden.

The availability of the ex-bowling club for lease is still to be advertised. It is also noted that Rawhiti Domain is being classified as a recreation reserve and part of the reserve may need to be classified as local purpose (community) reserve for uses such as residents' association meetings.

New Brighton Catholic Primary School: There is a hall available for hire and a Parish House that the school is willing to make available. *Charges:* No set rate for the hall, groups considered on an individual basis; Parish House, \$15.00 per meeting.

Brighton Masonic Lodge: The Lodge does not have a hall license for use by community groups and is not planning on obtaining one.

These accommodation options were presented to the New Brighton Resident's Association at a meeting held on Friday 15 February 2002, at Collingwood House. The New Brighton Residents' Association had also informed the other community groups that use Collingwood House of the meeting, and there were a number of people from these other groups present. The community groups present reached a consensus that the Power Boat Club and possibly the New Brighton (Working Men's) Club were the two most viable options; however there were objections raised about these venues also. A major concern raised about the former is that it is on a busy thoroughfare and a major concern about the latter was whether the 'spirit of community' between the groups would be lost using another organisation's building. It was suggested that these options be investigated further.

After the meeting, two representatives from the New Brighton Residents' Association also reported that the Association would be convening in the near future to discuss further the Association raising the money and buying Collingwood House itself. The representatives indicated they would also seriously consider putting a proposal forward to Age Concern to this end.

CONCLUSION

There are viable alternative accommodation options available for the New Brighton Resident's Association and also for the other community groups currently using Collingwood House. Officers will assist further in exploring the most viable options preferred by these community groups, the Power Boat Club and the New Brighton (Working Men's) Club, if required. The New Brighton Resident's Association will also continue to explore the viability of the Association buying Collingwood House.

- Recommendations:**
1. That officers advise Age Concern that the Council will not be purchasing/leasing Collingwood House.
 2. That officers assist further in exploring the most viable options preferred by the New Brighton Residents' Association and community groups occupying Collingwood House, if required.

Chairperson's

Recommendation: That the abovementioned recommendations be adopted.